

Master of Advanced Studies in International Health



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International/Global health and health challenges ahead

In international/global health, an interdisciplinary approach is used to address poverty-related health problems in resource constrained countries. Even with the international fight against poverty and its related diseases, challenges in this field are growing worldwide, disproportionately affecting some of the poorest countries. A lack of well-trained human resources in these settings is one of the most important barriers to progress.

Today, more financial resources are available to address the most urgent diseases and public health problems through programme implementation. However, health professionals face significant challenges related to low levels of individual and institutional capacity. Therefore, capacity strengthening to increase the number of well-trained personnel is vital to ensuring quality service provision.

The Masters in International Health programme at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) contributes to building these skills through an interdisciplinary, evidence- and competence-based training for health professionals. Graduates from this Masters programme have the capacity to critically analyse international/global health problems to identify determinants and to develop and evaluate adequate and appropriate responses in specific local and global contexts.

Structure of the programme

The Masters of Advanced Studies in International Health is a post-graduate study programme offered by Swiss TPH and the University of Basel, in cooperation with tropEd – the international network for Education in International Health.

The structure is modular and courses have to be taken in at least two different partner institutes in two different countries. Student investment time and performance in the courses and the Masters dissertation are measured with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Students register for the programme at Swiss TPH and attend a mandatory three-month core course on Health Care and Management in Tropical Countries (HCMTC). Upon meeting the performance requirements, they continue with their study, taking select advanced optional modules at Swiss TPH and/or in one or two of the partner institutes. Normally, students enter the Masters programme at the institute where they have completed the core course.

The Masters thesis is the concluding phase of the programme, where the student can integrate his or her knowledge. Students identify a topic for thesis study with guidance from the personal tutor and from experts in the field of interest. In many cases, the thesis is linked to the working environment of the student.

The Masters programme is equivalent to one year of full-time study and can be spread over a period of up to five years. Student investment time for the core course, the advanced modules and the thesis work is, on average, equally distributed, summing up to 1,800 hours.

tropEd Network

tropEd is a network of 30 institutions in 20 European and 10 overseas countries (Africa, Asia, Australia and Latin America), which agree on a common curriculum for a Masters programme in international/global health. The network was set up in 1996 and is registered as an association under German law. With initial financial support from the European Union and the Swiss Government to promote student and teacher mobility, it developed over the years into a globally recognised network for education in international health. tropEd focusses on real partnerships among institutions worldwide. The Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute is a founding member of tropEd and is represented in the Executive Committee and the Assembly.

The range of topics offered in the advanced optional modules covers all important fields of international/global health: epidemiology, social sciences, health economics, health management, treatment and prevention of diseases, health promotion, demography, leadership, scientific writing skills, as well as topics from basic sciences like biology, laboratory sciences, statistics, etc.

At present, some 120 training modules are accredited and offered by tropEd. More information about the network and the courses offered is available at: www.troped.org



Strengths of the Swiss TPH programme

Personal Tutoring

For a modular part-time programme, the student is always in close contact with a tutor who guides him or her through the whole process of Masters study.

At Swiss TPH, a personal tutor is assigned to each student and serves as a resource person for his/her own study programme. Based on suggestions from the student, the tutor will discuss the study plan, the selection of advanced optional modules and the plans for the Masters thesis.

The personal tutor at Swiss TPH is not only a measure to guarantee the quality of the study programme, but a resource for the individual learning process of each student. Most Swiss TPH students in this programme work at least part-time and need this assistance to keep track and to get the most out of a coherent and tailored study programme that fosters their professional career.

Programme structure

The modular structure of the Masters programme enables students to continue with their work, taking short breaks for the courses and for the Masters dissertation.

Swiss TPH students must take advanced optional modules in at least one of the partner institutes, to broaden their experience not only in international/global health, but also in various teaching and learning approaches. The additional contact with tropEd students from other institutions supports a mutual learning approach.

Quality

The programme is accredited by the University of Basel, the national accreditation body of the Swiss Universities and the tropEd network. The MIH diploma is awarded by the University of Basel.

Courses offered at the Swiss TPH include

Core course

- Health Care and Management in Tropical Countries

Advanced optional modules

- Health in detention
- Health policy and systems analysis
- How to plan successfully? A focus on priority setting, resource allocation and strategic planning for health
- Medical priorities and clinical tropical medicine in South East Asia
- Social marketing and communication
- Travellers' health

A win-win situation

Experience shows that the Masters programme in International Health at Swiss TPH can be of advantage for both students and the organisations where they are employed.

Students can continue to work, taking breaks for the core course, for the advanced optional modules and the master thesis. The knowledge and skills acquired from modules can be applied to the workplace, allowing for immediate application, practice and reinforcement of skills. Participants from resource poor countries are less likely to leave their posts after training, as they remain integrated in their work setting and are often promoted.



Costs of the programme

The total costs of the programme may vary depending on the advanced optional modules chosen.

The fee for the core course in Basel is CHF 7,000; the registration fee for the Masters programme is CHF 1,000. The advanced optional modules are around CHF 10,000 to CHF 15,000 total (depending on the modules taken); a thesis fee of CHF 1,000 will complete the fees to be paid.

Costs for travel to the partner institutions, and associated accommodation and living expenses have to be added.

Experience has shown that the total cost of the MIH programme is lower than a residential Masters programme in the field of Public/International/Global Health in institutions across Europe and North America.

Further information

For further information please contact:

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